

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. (allowed) In a crawler vehicle having a longitudinal axis; a frame extending along said longitudinal axis; two track carriages on opposite sides of said frame; first connecting device interposed between each said carriage and said frame to permit oscillation of each said carriage, with respect to said frame, about at least a first hinge axis perpendicular to said longitudinal axis; a connecting cross member substantially parallel to said first hinge axis; and second connecting device interposed between said cross member and each said carriage to permit relative oscillation of said cross member and the carriage about a second hinge axis perpendicular to said first hinge axis, the improvement comprising:

compensating mechanism for varying the length of said cross member between two given values as said carriages oscillate about said first hinge axis.

2. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 1 wherein said compensating mechanism forms part of said second connecting device.

3. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 1 wherein said compensating mechanism comprises, for each said carriage, a cylindrical body connected to one of said cross member and said carriage so as to rotate about the relative said second hinge axis and comprising an eccentric portion; connecting apparatus being provided to connect said eccentric portion to the other said cross member and said carriage.

4. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 3 wherein said connecting apparatus comprises a spherical joint.

5. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 4 wherein each said spherical joint comprises a spherical head carried by an associated eccentric portion; and a spherical seat engaged by said spherical head and carried by said cross member.

6. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 5 wherein each said cylindrical body is connected to the relative said carriage in a fixed axial position along said second hinge axis; and in that said spherical head is connected to the relative said eccentric portion in a manner to slide in opposite directions along the second hinge axis.

7. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 5 wherein each said spherical head is connected integrally to said eccentric portion; and in that each said cylindrical body includes a slide associated with a guide carried by the relative said carriage and permitting relative axial translation in opposite directions of said eccentric portion along said second hinge axis.

8. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 7 wherein each said cylindrical body comprises two coaxial cylindrical end portions on opposite axial sides of said eccentric portion.

9. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 8 wherein the diameters of said two coaxial cylindrical end portions are different.

10. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 9 wherein said eccentric portion has a diameter between those of said cylindrical end portions.

11. (allowed and currently amended) The crawler vehicle of Claim 10 wherein the axial projection of said eccentric portion along said second hinge axis is fully circumscribed by the axial projection of the one of the cylindrical end portions having the largest diameter, facilitating mounting of the cylindrical body in associated seats.

12. (allowed) The crawler vehicle of Claim 11 wherein said first connecting device allows each said carriage to oscillate, with respect to said frame, about at least one axis crosswise to said first hinge axis.

13. (allowed and currently amended) The crawler vehicle of Claim 12 wherein ~~the difference between~~ said two given values are different, and that difference equals twice the eccentricity of said eccentric portion.

14. (allowed and currently amended) The crawler vehicle of Claim 13 wherein the compensating mechanism is operable to compensate for any difference in trajectory between the track carriages and the connecting cross member in three orthogonal planes upon said carriages oscillating about said first hinge axis.